

(BEAUGE COMMENTED THAT MANY AMERICANS HAVE SAID SAME THING, RECALLING CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S STATEMENT THAT FAILURE TO PRODUCE A LIST IS "MOST OUTRAGEOUS" THING.)

-- IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR RULE OF LAW TO OPERATE AGAIN IN ARGENTINA SO THAT WHEN PEOPLE ARE ARRESTED, THEIR ARREST IS ACKNOWLEDGED AND THEIR DEFENSE IS PERMITTED.
-- WE KNOW OF PRESENCE OF INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS IN ARGENTINA, PERHAPS INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OR UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MIGHT BE INVITED ALSO.

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3. DEPTOFF ALSO MENTIONED SUSPICION THAT PRISONERS ARE BEING SHOT. HE NOTED THAT CASUALTY FIGURES ARE SURPRISING AND NO PRISONERS ARE TAKEN.

4. BEAUGE ASKED IF OUR EMBASSY INBUENOSAIRE HAD MADE THESE SAME POINTS. DEPTOFF SAID YES AND OFTEN. BEAUGE PERSISTED, ASKING IF THESE POINTS HAD BEEN MADE BY NEW RPT NEW ADMINISTRATION. HE SAID, "IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR YOUR SAME MESSAGE TO COME FROM ALL CHANNELS. THIS DID NOT HAPPEN IN PAST." BEAUGE WAS ASSURED THAT THE SAME MESSAGE WOULD BE COMING FROM ALL LEVELS OF NEW ADMINISTRATION.

5. BEAUGE VOICED SKEPTICISM THAT ADMINISTRATION'S CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WAS REALLY UNIVERSAL. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT ONLY A FEW WOULD SUFFER AS A RESULT OF THE U.S.

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STANCE, INCLUDING ARGENTINA.

6. IN CLOSING, DEPTOFF NOTED THAT RELATIONS WERE AT AN IMPORTANT JUNCTURE AND THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS DEPEND ON WHAT ARGENTINES DO.

7. JANUARY 31 CONVERSATION WAS INITIATED BY ARGENTINE FIRST SECRETARY URRUTIA. HE SAID THAT GOA HOPES TO FINALIZE 1977 FMS AGREEMENT WITH FEDERAL FINANCING BANK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT, SPEAKING PERSONALLY HE ADDED, HE FEARS COMPLICATIONS. DEPTOFF REPLIED THAT URRUTIA IS A GOOD OBSERVER AND THIS IS INDEED A DIFFICULT SUBJECT. URRUTIA RECALLED THAT CONGRESS HAD ALREADY AGREED TO OVER

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\$40 MILLION IN FMS CREDITS FOR ARGENTINA. CONVERSATION ENDED WITH DEPTOFF SUGGESTING THAT SUBJECT BE DISCUSSED LATER IN WEEK.
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DRAFTED BY:IO/HR:FJJCRAWFORD

APPROVED BY:II:PBUNGE

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FOLLOWING SECSTATE 023271 SENT ACTION BUENOS AIRES FEB. 2;
REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, MASS, AR, US

SUBJECT: U.S.-ARGENTINE RELATIONS

1. DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDS THAT ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL RETURNED TO BUENOS AIRES THIS PAST WEEKEND. WHILE HE RETURNED TO BRING HIS WIFE BACK TO WASHINGTON, HE WILL SURELY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS TRIP TO DISCUSS BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH HIS PRINCIPALS. WITH THIS IN MIND, ARA/ECA OFFICER ADVISED ARGENTINE POLITICAL COUNSELOR BEAUGE ON JANUARY 29 OF SERIOUS THOUGHT WHICH DEPARTMENT IS NOW GIVING TO U.S.-ARGENTINE RELATIONS. AFTER CONVERSATION, BEAUGE SAID HE WOULD MAKE SURE HIS AMBASSADOR IS FULLY INFORMED OF POINTS MADE BY DEPTOFF. ARA/ECA OFFICER ALSO HELD BRIEF CONVERSATION ON JANUARY 31 WITH ARGENTINE EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY URRUTIA CONCERNING FY 1977 FMS CREDITS.

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MAIN POINTS OF BOTH CONVERSATIONS ARE REPORTED BELOW.

2. ARA AUTHORIZED FERNANDO RONDON OF ECA TO MAKE APPROACH TO BEAUGE BECAUSE OF CLOSE TIES BETWEEN TWO OFFICERS AND DESIRE TO GET FEEDBACK. DEPTOFF MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- WE WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE/USEFUL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES IMPAIRED OVER HUMAN RIGHTS, TO WHICH NEW ADMINISTRATION ATTACHES TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE.

-- CONGRESSIONAL DISCUSSION OF ARGENTINA IS LIKELY IN NEAR FUTURE, WHETHER CONGRESSMAN PRASER INITIATES IT OR HOUSE COMMITTEE WHICH WILL REVIEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE REQUESTS DOES.

-- DURING DECEMBER VISIT TO ARGENTINA BY ARA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRAY, LATTER WAS VERY FRANK IN EXPLAINING TO GOA THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS ARE NOT THE PRE-OCCUPATION OF A FEW IN CONGRESS BUT REPRESENT BASIC POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK IN UNITED STATES.

-- ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IS FULLY AWARE THAT TWO MINIMAL STEPS MUST BE TAKEN URGENTLY,

NAMELY: A LIST OF DETAINEES MUST BE PUBLISHED AND RIGHT WING TERROR MUST BE PUNISHED.
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